

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION II

DATE: JAN 31 2009

SUBJECT: Removal Site Evaluation for Hexagon Laboratories, Bronx, New York (CERCLIS ID No. NYD046178075)

FROM: Nick Magriples, On-Scene Coordinator
Removal Action Branch



TO: File

Introduction

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Removal Action Branch has been requested to conduct a Removal Site Evaluation (RSE) at Hexagon Laboratories, a site where no further remedial action is planned (NFRAP). The NFRAP determination signifies that no additional remedial steps will be taken to list the Site on the National Priorities List unless new information warranting further Superfund consideration or conditions not previously known to EPA regarding the Site are disclosed. As of September 7, 2001, EPA had determined that no further remedial action was warranted by the Federal Superfund program at Hexagon Laboratories.

Site Description and Background

Hexagon Laboratories (Site) is located at 3536 Peartree Avenue in the Eastchester section of the Bronx, New York. The Site, the former location of a chemical manufacturing firm, occupies approximately one-half of a city block in a densely populated urban area. The Site is bordered by Boston Post Road to the north, Tufo's Wholesale Dairy to the east, and auto repair and salvage shops to the south and west. The Site is situated in a mixed use neighborhood, with the closest residences being within two blocks of the Site. It is estimated that approximately 380,000 people reside within a three-mile radius of the Site. There are no potable water supplies in the area around the Site. New York City is supplied by reservoirs in upstate New York.

Hexagon Laboratories, Inc. began operations in 1946. The company produced medicinal chemicals and pharmaceuticals. Fifty-five chemical compounds were reportedly manufactured by the company in 1986. The manufacturing process included reactions, hydrogenation, crystallization, centrifuging, drying, and grinding. Raw materials and wastewaters were stored in 27 aboveground and underground tanks, and in a concrete-lined drum storage area. Wastewaters

underwent solvent separation and neutralization prior to discharge to the city sewer system. The company ceased operations in 1988 when it entered bankruptcy.

EPA received a request from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) in July 1992 to initiate a removal action in order to address the hazardous materials remaining at the Site. A removal action was initiated soon thereafter which entailed the removal and disposal of approximately 600 drums, 2,500 laboratory containers, and 27 above-ground and below-ground tanks containing highly explosive, corrosive, flammable and poisonous chemicals. The removal action was completed in April 1993.

The NYSDEC completed a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study and the Site was divided into two operable units. The Record of Decision (ROD) for OU-1 (soil) was signed in February 2000 and called for excavation to bedrock or the water table. Interim remedial measures were completed in December 1997 including asbestos removal, building demolition, and subsurface tank removal. The ROD for OU-2 (groundwater) was signed in July 2002 and called for groundwater treatment. The responsible parties completed the remedy for OU-1 in January 2006. The NYSDEC, under the State Superfund program, will be conducting the remedy for OU-2 with a significant monetary contribution from the responsible parties. The remedy design is currently ongoing. The NYSDEC has conducted an off-site investigation and determined that chlorobenzene is present off-site, deep in the fractured bedrock.

The New York State Department of Health has determined that the site does not warrant a vapor investigation due to the industrial nature of the area downgradient of the Site and the plume's movement towards the Hutchinson River, which is situated approximately three city blocks east of the Site.

Site assessment activities/observations

The Removal Site Evaluation (August 6, 1992) and the subsequent Action Memoranda (July 29, 1992 and January 28, 1993) were reviewed as part of this Removal Site Evaluation. Updated information was provided by the NYSDEC. A site reconnaissance was conducted by the Removal Action Branch on March 10, 2008. The original structures at the Site are no longer present. A fence presently surrounds the area.

Release or threatened release into the environment of a hazardous substance, or pollutant or contaminant

At the time that EPA initiated the removal action a list of raw materials used at the Site included diethyl ketone, furan methylene chloride, phenol, propionic acid, triethylamine, sodium hydroxide and hexamethylene diamine. Some of the wastes generated included diisobutylene, ethylene dichloride, paramethoxy phenyl acetic acid, and still bottoms. All of these wastes were either RCA-characteristic for either flammability or corrosivity, or specific RCRA F-coded wastes. Based on an inventory conducted at the Site in July 1992, the chemical hazards included potentially explosive materials, shock sensitives, water and air reactives, poisonous gas cylinders, carcinogens, flammables, oxidizers, and corrosives. The NYSDEC has reported that

the on-site groundwater is contaminated with a variety of hazardous substances, including chlorobenzene.

Threats to Public Health or Welfare

The EPA removal action addressed the threats associated with the containerized waste abandoned at the Site by Hexagon Laboratories. All of the buildings have been demolished, the soil remediated, and the Site is fenced. Groundwater contamination will be addressed by the NYSDEC. There are no potable wells in the area of the Site and the NYSDOH has stated that vapor intrusion is not an issue at the site.

Threats to the Environment

At this time there is no documentation to indicate that the Site is having an acute impact to any sensitive environments or natural resources.

Conclusions

The NYSDEC is addressing any remaining issues at the Site. Based on the available information, the Site does not warrant a CERCLA removal action at this time.